

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 ACDA-07 IO-13 /088 W

-----171053Z 036810 /21

P R 170953Z MAY 77

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4904

INFO CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 5632

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH, US

SUBJ: CHINA RESPONDS TO THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS ON TAIWAN

1. PRC VICE-PREMIER CHI TENG-KUEI'S MAY 16 INTERVIEW WITH THE "YOMIURI SHIMBUN", IN WHICH CHI REITERATES CHINA'S DETERMINATION TO USE FORCE IF NECESSARY TO "LIBERATE" TAIWAN, APPEARS TO BE A CALCULATED PRC RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S MAY 12 NEWS CONFERENCE REMARKS ABOUT CHINA. IN THE CHINESE TEXT OF THE INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN HONG KONG'S PRC-CONTROLLED "TA KUNG PAO", CHI IS DESCRIBED AS SAYING THAT THE U.S. HAS BROUGHT UP AN "ADDITIONAL CONDITION" (FU CHIA TIAO CHIEN; 7096/0502/2742/0115) IN WANTING THE TAIWAN QUESTION TO BE SOLVED PEACEFULLY. THIS APPEARS TO BE A DIRECT RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENT, "WE DON'T WANT TO SEE THE TAIWANESE PEOPLE PUNISHED OR ATTACKED". MORE DIRECTLY, THE PRO-PRC NEWSPAPER

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"COMMERCIAL DAILY", IN A MAY 17 COMMENTARY ENTITLED "WASHINGTON'S ATTITUDE AND PEKING'S PRINCIPLES", CONCLUDES THAT IF WHAT HAD BEEN REPORTED BY "YOMIURI" IS ACCURATE, CHI TENG-KUEI'S STATEMENT REPRESENTS A SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS ABOUT CHINA IN HIS MAY 12 PRESS CONFERENCE.

2. THE CHINESE ARE THUS PUBLICALLY STANDING FIRM ON THEIR "PRINCIPLED" POSITION THAT THE SOLUTION OF THE TAIWAN PROBLEM IS THEIRS AND THEIRS ALONG. AS A COMMENTARY IN THE MAY 17 "TA KUNG PAO" PHRASES IT, "CHINA WILL ABSOLUTELY NOT TRADE ITS PRINCIPLES. IT WILL ABSOLUTELY NOT ALLOW OTHER PEOPLE TO INTERFERE IN ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS (IN ORDER TO) GUARANTEE A 'PEACEFUL LIBERATION OF TAIWAN'." ADDITIONALLY, THE COMMENTARY STATES THAT THOSE IN AMERICA WHO FEEL CHINA IS ANXIOUS TO NORMALIZED WITH THE U.S. BECAUSE OF THE SINO-SOVIET SPLIT ARE ALSO IN ERROR.

3. AS THE FOREGOING WAS BEING WRITTEN WE RECEIVED THE "NEW EVENING POST," THE AFTERNOON SISTER EDITION OF THE "TA KUNG PAO". THE "NEW EVENING POST" CONTAINED AN EVEN MORE STRONGLY WORDED COMMENTARY ENTITLED "CARTER SHOULD RE-STUDY THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE. QUOTING DIRECTLY FROM PRESIDENT CARTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE, THE COMMENTARY NOTES HIS REFERENCE TO THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE AND THE HOPE THAT THE QUESTION OF TAIWAN CAN BE SETTLED BY PEACEFUL MEANS. THE COMMENTARY REPLIES, "THE HOPE IS YOUR HOPE, HOW IT IS LIBERATED IS THE BUSINESS OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE, PEACEFULLY WOULD BE FINE, BY WAR WOULD BE FINE, NEITHER ONE HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE UNITED STATES." THE COMMENTARY CONCLUDES THAT PRESIDENT CARTER SHOULD TAKE CARE TO AVOID FURTHER SLIPS OF THE TONGUE.

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